

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 FREETO 00209 01 OF 02 261131Z

16-42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 /026 W

----- 031312

O 231000Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2519

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 FREETOWN 0209

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADD LAGOS AS INFO ADDEE)

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SL, AO, GV

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STEVENS CONFIDES GOSL WAVERING ON ANGOLA

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT STEVENS HAS TOLD ME THAT GOSL POSITION ON ANGOLA IS WAVERING. RECOGNITION OF MPLA SOON IS POSSIBILITY. OPPORTUNITY STILL REMAINS, HOWEVER, THAT QUICK DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY ON SEVERAL FRONTS MAY STRENGTHEN GOSL RESOLVE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN HIGHLY UNUSUAL MANNER, PRESIDENT STEVENS TELEPHONED ME AT HOME NIGHT OF JANUARY 22 TO SAY THAT HE HAD IMPORTANT MATTER TO DISCUSS AND WISHED TO VISIT MY HOME FORTY-FIVE MINUTES LATER. AFTER ARRIVING AT RESIDENCE, HE SAID THAT HE WANTED TO TELL ME SOMETHING HE WAS TELLING NO OTHER DIPLOMAT AND HE WANTED NO ONE IN HIS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 FREETO 00209 01 OF 02 261131Z

GOVERNMENT TO KNOW ABOUT HIS CALL ON ME. I WAS NO DOUBT

AWARE THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR MOVING GOSL INTERNATIONAL POLICY IN DIRECTION OF USG OVER THE PAST YEAR. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT GOSL WORLD VIEW BEST APPROXIMATED THAT OF USG. OUR FREQUENT DISCUSSIONS WERE IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THAT EVOLUTION. HE FOUND HIMSELF CURRENTLY, HOWEVER, IN VERY DIFFICULT POSITION AND WAS AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT BEFORE LONG HAVE TO CHANGE GOSL POSITION ON ANGOLA IN FAVOR OF MPLA. EARLIER IN WEEK HE HAD RECEIVED DELEGATION FROM GUINEA AND NEXT DAY, JANUARY 23, PRIME MINISTER KAMARA-TAYLOR AND FOREIGN MINISTER MINAH WERE PAYING RETURN VISIT THERE. GUINEANS WERE PUSHING HARD TO GAIN MORE SUPPORTERS FOR MPLA. HE ALSO EXPECTING VISIT ON JAN 23 BY NIGERIAN "SECOND IN COMMAND," WHO HE WAS SURE WOULD BE ADAMANT IN SUPPORT OF MPLA.

3. OF FURTHER SERIOUS CONCERN TO STEVENS HOWEVER, WERE INDICATION THAT USG, WHOSE POSITION AND SUPPORT HE HAD SO APPROPRIATE, NOW SEEMED TO BE LOSING HEART. HE HAD READ THAT USG SPOKESMAN HAD INDICATED THAT "OUR" SIDE WAS COLLAPSING AND THAT CONGRESS WAS NOT GOING TO ALLOW CONTINUED USG MATERIEL SUPPORT. AS I KNEW, HE HAD RELIED ON MY JUDGMENT OF ANGOLAN SITUATION AND USG INFORMATION IN THE PAST. GIVEN THE ABOVE SITUATION, HE DID NOT FEEL THAT GOSL COULD BE ODD MAN OUT IN WEST AFRICA OR AMONG LAST COUNTRIES TO RECOGNIZE MPLA WHOSE EVENTUAL VICTORY NOW SEEMED INCREASINGLY PROBABLE.

4. I TOLD STEVENS I DEEPLY APPRECIATED HIS SHARING WITH ME AND USG HIS PERSONAL CONCERNS OVER THIS ISSUE ON WHICH WE SHARED A COMMON POSITION. I WAS ANXIOUS, HOWEVER, TO CLARIFY SOME POSSIBLE MISCONCEPTIONS. USG SUPPORT FOR COALITION GOVERNMENT IN ANGOLA WAS NOT DIMINISHING. EARLIER THIS WEEK, PRESIDENT FORD HAD REITERATED USG POSITION AND YESTERDAY SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD REPEATED IT IN MOSCOW AND HAD DONE SO IN THE CONTEXT OF POSSIBLE THREAT TO DETENTE ITSELF. ALTHOUGH FNLA HAD SUSTAINED SERIOUS LOSSES, THEY SEEMED DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN GUERRILLA WARFARE AGAINST THE MPLA IN THE NORTH WHERE THE INHABITANTS, THE BAKONGO, WERE ALMOST
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 FREETO 00209 01 OF 02 261131Z

EXCLUSIVELY FNLA SUPPORTERS; THE MPLA WERE STRANGERS THERE. FOR ITS PART, UNIT WAS HOLDING ITS OWN IN THE SOUTH AND STILL HELD OVER HALF THE TERRITORY OF THE COUNTRY. LIKE GOSL AND THE OAU, USG CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT ETHNIC NATURE OF THREE POLITICAL PARTIES, SO APPARENT BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE, MADE SOME KIND OF COALITION A NECESSITY. STEVENS HIMSELF CONTINUED TO STRUGGLE IN SL TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL ALLEGIANCE TO

OVERRIDE TRIBAL LOYALTIES. WOULD HE SUPPORT ONE FACTION
IN ANGOLA WHEN ONLY COALITION WOULD EMBODY SAME APPROACH
THERE?

5. STEVENS SAID HE WAS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT US-USSR
DETENTE. HE VIEWED DETENTE AS METHOD TO RESTRICT
SOVIET ADVENTUROUSNESS. IN SPITE OF US THREATS, USSR
CONTINUED ITS MASSIVE SUPPORT FOR MPLA. HE DID NOT LIKE
THAT, NOR THE IMPLICATION THAT IN WAKE OF VIETNAM USG
UNABLE TO COUNTER SOVIET THRUSTS. HE WAS MENTIONING THIS
ONLY IN PASSING, HE SAID, RATHER THAN RELATING IT TO
HIS PRESENT CONCERNS.

6. I ASKED STEVENS IF HE WERE TELLING ME THAT HE HAD
ALREADY MADE DECISION TO RECOGNIZE MPLA AND PLANNED
TO ANNOUNCE IT OVER WEEKEND. HE GAVE IMMEDIATE NEGATIVE
RESPONSE. ON JANUARY 23 HE WOULD CABLE LIBERIAN PRESIDENT
TOLBERT AND REQUEST MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 25 AT SITE
OF NEW MANO RIVER BRIDGE TO REVIEW SITUATION. IN
ANY CASE, HE COULD NOT CHANGE GOSL POSITION SO CLOSE TO
GUINEAN AND NIGERIAN VISITS THAT IT LOOKED LIKE HE WAS
SUCCUMBING TO PRESSURE.

7. I REMINDED STEVENS THAT USG POSITION WAS NOT AN
ANTI-MPLA ONE. USG WILLING TO WORK WITH WHATEVER
GOVERNMENT REFLECTED WILL OF ANGOLAN PEOPLE. THIS WAS
POSITION WE HAD ARRIVED AT NOT ONLY AS RESULT OF YEARS
OF OBSERVATIONS OF POST-INDEPENDENCE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE,

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 FREETO 00209 02 OF 02 231437Z

42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 (ISO) W

----- 125237

O 231000Z JAN 76 ZFG

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2520

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MCONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 FREETOWN 0209

EXDIS

LONDON FOR WEITZ

BUT ALSO, MUCH AS STEVENS HIMSELF HAD STATED SEVERAL TIMES, AFTER OBSERVING THE ATTITUDES OF THOSE LEADERS WHOSE COUNTRIES BORDERED ON ANGOLA, PARTICULARLY KAUNDA AND MOBUTU. I URGED STEVENS TO CONTINUE TO CONSIDER THE VIEWS OF ANGOLA'S NEIGHBORS IN DERIVING GOSL POSITION.

8. STEVENS SAID THAT HE WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING KAUNDA'S VIEWS. KAUNDA HAD SENT STEVENS A LONG LETTER ABOUT THREE WEEKS AGO THAT HAD BEEN VERY IMPORTANT. SENGHOR WAS ANOTHER LEADER WHOSE VIEWS STEVENS CONSIDERED IMPORTANT. RELATIONS WITH SENGHOR HAD NOT BEEN VERY CLOSE IN PAST, BUT STEVENS WAS GROWING TO REALIZE THAT SENGHOR HAD A MOST SOUND VISION OF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS. KAMARA-TAYLOR, WHO HAD REPRESENTED GOSL AT OAU HEADS OF STATE MEETING, HAD FOUND SENGHOR THE MOST PERSUASIVE AND RATIONAL PERSON PRESENT. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, STEVENS DID NOT WANT GOSL TO BE IN SMALL MINORITY AMONG ECOWAS COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY GIVEN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 FREETO 00209 02 OF 02 231437Z

THEDEFINITE VIEWS OF POWERFUL NIGERIA.

9. AS HE ROSE TO LEAVE I REITERATED TO STEVENS THAT I DEEPLY APPRECIATED HIS CHOOSING TO VISIT ME TO CONFIDE IN ME THE CURRENT STATE OF HIS THINKING. I ASSURED HIM THAT I WOULD REPORT HIS VIEWS TO MY GOVERNMENT AND WOULD LET HIM KNOW ASAP ANY INFORMATION THAT MIGHT BE RELEVANT TO HIS IMPORTANT DELIBERATIONS ON ANGOLA. HE URGED ME TO DO SO BEFORE TUESDAY.

10. COMMENT. FACT THAT GOSL NOW WAVERING NOT COMPLETE SURPRISE. ON CONTRARY, WESTERN DIPLOMATS HERE HAVE BEEN SURPRISED BY PREVIOUS OUTSPOKED POSITION OF MODERATION. KEY QUESTION, HOWEVER, IS WHETHER GOSL IS INDEED WAVERING OR WHETHER STEVENS IN SEARCHING FOR AMMUNITION TO BUTTRESS CURRENT POSITION IN INTERNAL GOSL DISCUSSIONS. REGARDLESS, HOWEVER, STEVENS CALL ON ME SHOULD BE SEEN AS CHALLENGE TO USG AND OUR ALLIES ON THIS ISSUE TO GIVE REASONS WHY GOSL SHOULD MAINTAIN ITS POSITION IN FACE OF POLITICAL PRESSURE AND RISING FORTUNES OF MPLA. A

COLLECTION OF SEVERAL ACTIONS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY
USEFUL OVER NEXT FOUR DAYS:

1. APRISE TOLBERT AHEAD OF TIME SO THAT HE CAN STIFFEN
STEVENS' BACKBONE ON SUNDAY;

2) ELICIT LETTER AT LEAST FROM KAUNDA;

3) ENCOURAGE HIGH LEVEL MESSENGER FROM SENGHOR;

4) RECOMMEND DEMARCHES FROM WESTERN AMBASSADORS
RESIDENT IN FREETOWN, PARTICULARLY U.K. AND FRG AND
POSSIBLY FRANCE;

5) ARM ME WITH BRIEFING MATERIAL ON CURRENT STATE
OF FIGHTING ON SOUTHERN FRONT AND ON CURRENT MANEUVERING
TAKING PLACE AROUND KAUNDA. IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL IF
I COULD DELIVER PERSONAL MESSAGE, PREFERABLY FROM
PRESIDENT FORD TO STEVENS (WHO KEEPS PRESIDENT FORD'S
AUTOGRAPHED PICTURE IN CONSPICUOUS PLACE BEHIND HIS DESK),
REEMPHASIZING USG WILL AND URGING SUPPORT FOR

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 FREETO 00209 02 OF 02 231437Z

COALITION THAT REFLECTS ALL POLITICAL VIEWS AND TRIBAL
LOYALTIES IN ORDER TO BRING EARLY END TO BLOODY
HOSTILITIES.

11. ALTHOUGH MONDAY IS SOON ENOUGH FOR ABOVE ACTIONS TO
TAKE PLACE IN FREETOWN, IT WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE
STEVENS BRIEFLY AT PARADE SATURDAY MORNING. I CAN
EASILY ARRANGE AT THAT TIME TO PASS ANY MESSAGE TO HIM.

12. ONE FACTOR TO BE BORNE IN MIND BY DEPARTMENT IS
THAT GOSL ECONOMY IN PRECARIOUS STATE WITH FINDING CASH
TO PAY SALARIES A MONTHLY PROBLEM. AN OFFER OF BUDGET
SUPPORT FROM ANY OF THE OPPOSING LAYERS IN THIS DRAMA
COULD SWING THE TIDE.

SAMUELS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976FREETO00209
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: FREETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760125/aaaaavyz.tel
Line Count: 265
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <20 AUG 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT STEVENS CONFIDES GOSL WAVERING ON ANGOLA
TAGS: SL, AO, GV
To: SECSTATE WASHDC ADDIS ABABA BONN CONAKRY DAKAR LAGOS LONDON LUSAKA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006